



U.S. FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE



U.S. Department of the Interior

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION BULLETIN

Prepared by the Division of Human Resources

Washington, D. C.

Date: MAY 14 2002

To: All U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Employees

Subject: Use of Automated Telephone Answering Systems

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all Service employees of the role quality customer service plays in making the Service a respected and vital organization. An important aspect of customer service is being available when a customer needs to communicate with us. In today's world of advanced technology, we must remember that reaching a helpful employee rather than an automated message goes a long way.

Public Law No. 107-63, Section 322, requires that, other than in emergencies, during core business hours, answering machines must include an option that enables callers to promptly reach an individual on duty. I intend to firmly enforce this law, and am requiring all offices to have staff available to answer telephone calls during core operating hours. If an office utilizes an automated answering system, there must be an option for customers to by-pass the system and reach an employee immediately. In addition, the by-pass telephone numbers must be covered during core hours by an employee, not another answering system.

Offices that fail to comply with the law face the possibility of the loss of their automated answering systems. I expect each member of the Directorate to take personal responsibility for ensuring that all offices reporting to them are in complete compliance.

I appreciate that all Service employees are dedicated and committed to customer service and, as a result, will ensure that customers have a direct method to communicate with us.

DIRECTOR